GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:422
ANSWERED ON:17.04.2001
RECEDING OF GANGOTRI GLACIER
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gangotri Glacier is receding at an alarming pace;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted to find out the reasons for such significant changes in the shape and position of the glacier;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the measures taken to ensure that the human interference do not any way impact on the glacier?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (Dr. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) The studies carried out have indicated that Gangotri glacier is passing through a phase of recession. It is a well established fact that glaciers in general recede or build up in response to various natural causes including variations in the microclimate of the region in which they are located and it is not possible to classify a recessionary phase as necessarily alarming.

(b) & (c) In order to gain more scientific insights into the variability of glacier movements and other related parameters in the Himalayan glacier region, a multidisciplinary and multi-institutional field-observation based R&D programme on Gangotri glacier has been recently launched as a part of the on-going Himalayan Glaciology Programme.

(d) The measures taken to reduce the effect of human interference on the glacier include conservation activities such as afforestation, removal of garbage and promotion of sustainable ecotourism.